A

LETTER

FROM A

Member of PARLIAMENT

TO HIS

Friend in the COUNTRY;

Concerning a Bill ſent from the Houſe of Commons, in Order to be paſt into a Law for diſabling Penſioners from Sitting, or Voting, in the Houſe.

WITH

Some Obſervations on the *Lords Proteſt* for Confirming the ſaid Bill.

In which is incerted,

The Speech of Sir *Francis Wennington* to a Former Parliament, relating to thoſe ſort of Monſters, call'd Penſioners.

To which is added,

Some Remarks on the 115,000 *l.* granted to make good the Arrears in the Civil Liſt Revenues.

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A LETTER FROM A Member of PARLIAMENT TO HIS FRIEND, &c.

SIR,

I Have ſent you ſome Account of the many Advantages that would neceſſarily attend a due Obſervance of the Act paſſed the Houſe of Commons, had it met

with the like Receptionfrom the Lords, Intitled, *An Act for the making more effectual the Laws in Being, for disabling Persons being chosen Members of, or sitting, or voting in the House of Commons, who have any Pension during Pleasure, or for any Number of Years, or any Offices holden in Trust for them, by Obliging all Persons hereafter to be chosen for the Commons in Parliament, to take the Oath therein mentioned.*

The Prospect, though I must confess it was at some Distance, of seeing *once more* the Subject left to his own voluntary Choice of electing whom he shall think most proper to represent him in Parliament, so delight'd me, that I began to glow with something of that Transport, which must unadvoidably have fill'd the Breast of every true *Briton*, when a Parliament had been chosen without the Influence of Money, or without Pensioners.

As such Representatives could have nothing more at Heart than the Good of those Persons whom they represent; we might then hope for such Laws as would not only secure and enlarge our Trade, the true Support of the *British* Nation, but an entire Surrender of those Places,

ces, which, by their Situation, are of the utmoſt Advantage to us, in order to the Protection of the moſt valuable Part of it.

In ſhort, Sir, the Advantages accruing from that wonderful Bill, would have been ſo univerſally extenſive, that there could not have been a ſingle Perſon in this Nation, but would ſoon be inenlivened by its benign Influence. The Merchant might then with Safety have ſent his Goods to foreign Markets, without any Apprehenſion of their being ſeized and detained; knowing that he had a *Britiſh* Parliament to appeal to, who would not in any Reſpect *tamely* ſuffer any of our Neighbours to infringe our Prerogative, as to Trade, without ſhewing ſuch a Reſentment, as would be very terrible to the Agreſſors. And as the Merchant would have been by this Means encouraged to ſend his Goods abroad; ſo he would becn enabled, in another Sort of a Way than he has been of late, to employ our different Sorts of Manufacturers at Home: Our Complaints, which, on every Side, are now ſo loud, for Want of Trade, would have been then huſh'd into a general Silence; and our Poor which

for

for ſome Time have been the Burden (for Want of Employment) would then been the Advantage of the *Britiſh* Nation.

And as the Trade of this Nation would be thus increaſed, ſo in a great Meaſure, thoſe unhappy Diſputes which have ariſen among Friends at former Elections, will then be laid aſide: For no Perſon will have it to conſider who gives moſt, ſo every one may the more eaſily determine who is the fitteſt to repreſent him in Parliament.

I hope you will excuſe my Warmth when you conſider, that the Proſpect taking of thoſe Advantages, which would ariſe to our Country from a Bill which was ſo unexpectedly paſſed by a Houſe of Parliament from whom we expected nothing of that Nature, that I could not entertain the leaſt Scruple of its meeting with a Sanction in the Houſe of Lords, and muſt confeſs was ſurprized to find my ſelf diſappointed, eſpecially that it was not ſo much as committed, but intirely rejected at once, notwithſtanding what was advanced by ſo many noble Lords in its Behalf. Part of which

was

was to the following Effect, which I ſubmit to your Conſideration, *viz.*

Becauſe all Objections againſt particular Clauſes, *&c.* in the Bill, would have been properly the Subject of a Debate in a Committee, and therefore it was with great concern that the ſaid Bill ſhould not receive the Countenance of a Commitment, when the Houſe of Commons, who alone it muſt immediately affect, had paſt it with ſo much Honour to themſelves.

The Bill in Effect, enacting nothing new, but being only to enforce the Obſervation, and prevent the Evaſion of former Laws which were judged neceſſary for the publick Good by many foregoing Parliaments, but they would not determine upon publick Fame, or private Suſpicion, whether theſe Abuſes and Evaſions of ſo many Acts of Parliament had prevailed or not, but it was evident they might be introduced under a corrupt Adminiſtration, and that a Law which would prevent them effectually, as they believed the Bill ſent up by the Commons would have done, could not have met with too great Encourage-

couragement from that Houſe, and that it would be more to the Honour of that Houſe, to repeal the former Laws made againſt Penſioners ſitting in the Houſe of Commons, than to reject a Bill deſigned to render theſe Laws effectual; and that although this Bill tends to reſtrain any dangerous Influence over the Houſe of Commons; yet it leaves an Influence intire to the Crown, as will appear ſufficient, there being at preſent hardly leſs than Two Hundred Members who hold Offices and Employments under the Crown, as would have continued to be Tenable by them, if this Bill had paſs'd, and the Power of granting Penſions for Life to Members of Parliament openly would have ſtill remain'd in the Crown.

All Influence over either Houſe of Parliament except that which ariſes from a Senſe of thoſe Duties which we owe to our King and our Country, are improper, and if ever a corrupt Miniſter ſhould have the Diſpoſition of Places, and the Diſtribution of Penſions, &c. he may create ſuch an Influence, as might deprive the

Prince

Prince of the great Advantage of knowing the true Senſe of his People, and for the ſake of an unworthy Servant, looſe their Affections.

And that when National or other Circumſtances expoſed the Crown to any new Danger, additional Oaths of Fidelity and Allegiance, have been given by the Subjects, and therefore by parity of Reaſon, ſome greater Security ſhould be now given to the Nation, by their Repreſentatives for their faithful Diſcharge of the Truſt repoſed in them, the Truſt having become greater, by the heavy Taxes which have for many Years paſt, been annually laid by the Parliament on the People.

But notwithſtanding theſe and many other cogent Reaſons, as thoſe immenſe Debts which have been contracted, and the vaſt increaſe of the civil Liſt Revenue, &c. the Queſtion being put, whether the Bill ſhall be Rejected it was reſolved in the Affirmative.

I ſhall take the Liberty of making ſome Remarks concerning the 115,000*l.*

granted

granted, upon Account of Arrears in the *Civil Liſt Revenues*.

I took Notice in my laſt of an Act paſſed in the 9th and 10th Year of the Reign of King *William*, wherein the Parliament ſettled upon him for Life, for the Uſes of his Civil Government, a Sum certain, or Rent Charge, of 700,000 *l. per Annum* to ariſe from ſeveral Duties and Revenues, and which, if they produced more than that Sum, the *Surplus* was to be reſerved for the Diſpoſition of Parliament; and if, by any Accident, they ſhould fall ſhort of that Sum within any one Year, there was no Obligation on the Parliament to make good any ſuch Deficiences; wherefore I have to add, that it is very reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that ſuch *Surplus* as ſhould ariſe one Year was certainly to be applyed to make good the Deficiencies of another Year.

I took Notice alſo, that by another Act paſſed in the 12th and 13th Year of King *William*'s Reign, the Parliament charged 192,400 *l. per Annum*, by a Deduction of 3730 *l. per* Week, one of the Hereditary and Temporary Exciſe, Part of the Revenues granted to the King by the former Act,

for

for raiſing a Sum of Money for the Service of the Year, and then left the Revenues and Duties to the King, without Account for any Surplus, as well as without any Claim on the Publick to make good Deficiencies, it being *well judg'd*, at that Time, that there was no likelihood of a Surplus, after ſuch a Deduction; wherefore the *King* was to take the Chance of the Produce of the ſame.

I believe I fully ſatisfy'd you in my laſt concerning the Settlement made upon her Majeſty Queen *Anne* for her Life; as likewiſe to the Act made in the firſt Year of the Reign of his late Majeſty, entitled, *An Act for the better Support of his Majeſty's Houſhold, and of the Honour and Dignity of the Crown of* Great Britain, by which Act I ſaid his Majeſty is to enjoy all the Civil Liſt Revenues, with 120,000 *l.* out of the Aggregate Fund, without Account for any Surpluſſes over and above 800,000 *l.* however conſiderable they may happen to be in any Year; and yet the Publick, by a Clauſe in the ſame Act, is to make good Deficiencies; or, as the Clauſe for giving the 115,000 *l.* has conſtrued it, any Arrears of theſe Revenues ſtanding

out

out and not paid into the Exchequer at *Midſummer Day*, to Compleat 800,000*l.* *per Annum*.

Now indeed, conſidering this Caſe as a Deficiency only, the Diſadvantage to the Publick appears to me to be much greater than what it did, when I wrote to you laſt; as for Inſtance, the People are not only obliged to make good *caſual* and *real* Deficiencies, but, by the Conſtruction of the above Clauſe, they are obliged to Compleat whatever Sum is wanting of the full 800,000*l.* actually received into the Exchequer, the very *Midſummer Day* the Year ends, notwithſtanding the Arrears ſtanding out in Bills of Exchange, Monies remaining in the Receivers and Collectors Hands, more than ſufficient to make good this Sum.

The firſt Motion of the Secretary of the Treaſury for an Addreſs to the King, that the proper Officers might be directed to lay before the Houſe of Commons an Account of the Net Produce of the Civil Liſt Revenues within the Year from *Midſummer* 1728, over and above the Annual, Weekly, or other Payments and Incumbrances thereon, and over above all Grants made

made by any of his Majeſty's Predeceſſors, I think is a Thing of great Intricacy, of which in my laſt I gave you an Account in particular of the Deſign of that Motion being apprehended by the Members of the Houſe of Commons, as ſoon as it was made. But now I ſhall lay before you the Account that was brought in and ſigned by the Secretary of the Treaſury, *viz.* the 115,000 *l.* granted for to make good the Arrears in his preſent Majeſty's Civil Liſt Revenues is ſtated as a Deficiency only. In the Reſolution and in the Clauſe of Appropriation, it is called an Arrear; and an Arrear to be replaced and refunded, which I think is very hard upon the Publick, that they muſt be obliged to make good whatever Deficiencies may happen thro' the Connivance of a Miniſter, and then there was ſo for from being a Deficiency, that the Produce of the Year was 912,649 *l.* of which 708,366 *l.* [not 708,368 *l.* as I mentioned in my laſt] was actually received in Monies in *London* before *Midſummer* 1728: Then there has been received ſince 128,116 *l.* [not 128,115 *l.* as I mentioned in my laſt] and left out in

Arrears in *April* laſt 76,167 *l.* [not 76,165 *l.* as I mentioned in my laſt] which, whenever paid, muſt be accounted as the Produce of the Year from *Midſummer* 1727 to *Midſummer* 1728.

I happened, not many Nights ſince, in Company with ſeveral of the Members of the Houſe of Commons, ſome who voted for, and others who voted againſt granting the Sum of 115,000 *l.* for the making good Deficiencies in his Majeſty's Civil Liſt Revenues, and others who were abſent, through Buſineſs, when the ſame was put to Vote, and who had bought ſeveral of my laſt Letters to you, which were printed at my Requeſt; whereupon they began a Diſcourſe upon the Validity of the ſame; and when they came to that Part of it, wherein I ſaid, That *Theſe are ſuch* Arrears *as, I believe, there is not a Man in the Kingdom but will agree, that the Parliament at the Time of Paſſing this Clauſe, neither thought nor intended ſhould be ever made good by the People; for theſe are ſuch* Arrears, *as, is well known, muſt be unavoidable to a certain Degree in every Year, and may, at any Time, be encreaſed by a* deſigning *and* corrupt

corrupt Miniſter, *to any Sum he thinks fit; and this without appearing to give Directions to his Officers of the Revenues, but by a bare Connivance only, by the Negligence of a Treaſurer in not quickening Payments, or by forgetting, for many Years, whole Branches of the Revenue, as happened not long ago,* in the memorable Caſe of the HAWKERS and PEDLARS: *ſo that let the Net Produce of the Revenues be never ſo great, theſe* pretended Arrears *are to be made good by the* Land-Tax, *or other Supplies of the Year. Thus the well-known Author of a* Pamphlet *, *publiſh'd in the Year* 1713, *may aſſume the Merit of having himſelf accompliſh'd what he then foretold, and ſeem'd to apprehend very much,* that a Land or Malt-Tax *might be made at laſt an* hereditary Revenue, for the Support of the Honour and Dignity of the Crown.

They agreed, that my Remarks were juſt and well grounded, and that when the Parliament met again, the Members ought, immediately after voting an humble, dutiful, and loyal Addreſs to his Majeſty, to give me Thanks, in

**Vide* Pamphlet, A ſhort Hiſtory of the Parliament. Writ by *R---- W----*, Eſq;

the moſt Publick Manner, for the Honour I had done them in the ſame.

Sir *Francis Wennington*'s Speech to a former Parliament of *Great Britain* I think carries with it ſuch an excellent Morral, and beſides ſo nearly comes up to the preſent Caſe, I ſhall now mention it to you, as you may at any Time when you ſhall happen to be at an Election for a Member to ſerve in Parliament, recommend it to be read by the Returning Officer to the Electors, before they proceed to give their Vote or Poll.

Mr. SPEAKER,

'THE laſt Houſe of Commons being ſenſible how narrowly 'this Nation eſcap'd being ruined by 'a Sort of Monſters call'd *Penſioners*, 'who ſate in the late *long Parliament*, 'had enter'd into a Conſideration how 'to prevent the like from coming into 'future Parliaments; and in order 'thereto, reſolved, That they would 'ſeverely chaſtiſe ſome of thoſe who 'had been guilty; and make the beſt 'Laws they could to prevent the like 'for the future: And for that Purpoſe,

'a

‘ a *Committee* was appointed, of which
‘ Mr. Serjeant *Gregory* was Chairman;
‘ by which many Papers relating to
‘ that Affair came into his Hands:
‘ *Sir*, I think it a Buſineſs of ſo great
‘ Importance, that it ought never to be
‘ forgotten, nor the Proſecution of it
‘ deferr'd. I have often heard, that
‘ *England* can never be deſtroy'd, but
‘ by *itſelf*. To have ſuch *Parliaments*
‘ was the moſt likely Way that ever
‘ was invented. I remember a *Great*
‘ *Lawyer* ſaid in this Houſe, That it was
‘ debated in the laſt Parliament that
‘ it was TREASON; and he gave
‘ many learned Arguments to make
‘ it out. Whether it be ſo or no, I
‘ will not now offer to debate: But
‘ I think, that when *They*, who are
‘ the Legiſlators of the Nation, take
‘ *Bribes* to undermine the Laws and
‘ Government of this Nation, they
‘ ought to be chaſtiſed as *TRATORS*.
‘ It was my Fortune to ſit here a little
‘ while in the *long Parliament*. I did
‘ obſerve, that all thoſe who had *Pen-*
‘ *ſions*, and moſt of thoſe who had
‘ Offices, voted all of a Side, as they
‘ were directed by ſome *Great Officers*,
‘ as exactly as if their Buſineſs in this

Houſe

'House had been to preserve their 'Pensions and *Offices*, and not to make 'Laws for the Good of *them* who sent 'them here. How such Persons could 'any Ways be *useful* for the Support 'of the *Government*, by preserving a 'fair Understanding between the King 'and his *People*; but on the contrary, 'how dangerous to bring in *Arbitrary* 'Power, I leave to every Man's Judg-'ment. They were so far from being 'the *True Representatives* of the PEO-'PLE, that they were a *distinct*, *middle* 'Interest between the *King* and the 'People; and their chief Business was 'to serve the End of some *Great Mi-'nister of State*, though never so *oppo-'site to the true Interest of the Nation.*

In my last Letter I gave you a List of the Names of such of the Members as voted both for and against granting the 115,000 *l.* to make good the Arrears of the Civil List Revenues, wherefore in this I shall give you a List of the Names of those Members, that were absent with *Leaves*, or Sickness, or particular Business in his Majesty's Service, when the same was granted: I will not pretend to say any of them were away de-

signedly,

ſignedly, becauſe if they had been preſent, they muſt have been obliged to have done, what they ever after would have been aſhamed of, (*they full well new the Conſequence elſe*) in order to keep pace with *another*, whoſe Name is already as *black* as it well can be.

A LIST *of ſuch Members of the Honourable Houſe of Commons, as were abſent when the* 115,000 *l. was granted upon Account of Arrears in his preſent Majeſty's* Civil Liſt Revenues.

RIGHT Honourable WILLIAM PULTENEY, Eſq; P. C.
Colonel Harry Pulteney, Eſq;
Sir Rowland Alſton, Bart.
Robert Packer, Eſq;
Sir John Stonehouſe, Bart.
Richard Pottenger, Eſq;
Richard Thompſon, Eſq;
William Hucks, Eſq;
Sir William Stanhope, Knight of the Bath.
George Chamberlayne, Eſq;
William Leigh, Eſq;
Edward Rudge, Eſq;
Marmaduke Allington, Eſq;
Honourable John Hamilton, Eſq;
Samuel Shepherd, Eſq;

Henry

Henry Bromley, Eſq;
Honourable Edward Finch, Eſq;
Charles Cholmondeley, Eſq;
Thomas Groſvenor, Eſq;
Sir William Carew, Bart.
Sir John St. Aubin, Bart.
Honourable John King, Eſq;
Arthur Tremayne, Eſq;
Honourable Hugh Boſcawen, Eſq;
Sidney Meadows, Eſq;
John Le Roche, Eſq;
Sir John Trelawney, Bart.
Jonathan Raſhleigh, Eſq.
Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Knt.
Sidney Godolphin, Eſq;
Sir William Morrice, Bart.
William Eaſt, Eſq;
Sir John Coryton, Bart.
John Hylton, Eſq;
Godfrey Clark, Eſq;
Right Honourable William Stanhope, Eſq;
Sir William Courtney, Bart.
John Rolle, Eſq;
Francis Drew, Eſq;
John Belfield, Eſq; Serjeant at Law.
Arthur Stert, Eſq;
William Northmore, Eſq;
Richard Coffin, Eſq;
Honourable Theophilus Forteſcue, Eſq;

Sir Humphry Monnoux, Bart.
Sir Francis-Henry Drake, Bart.
Roger Tuckfield, Eſq;
George Treby, Eſq;
Henry Howard, Eſq;
Arthur Arſcott, Eſq;
George Chaſin, Eſq;
George Trenchard, Eſq;
John Brown, Eſq;
Henry Drax, Eſq;
Henry-Holt Henley, Eſq;
William Betts, Eſq;
Edward Tucker, Eſq;
Sir Edward Desboverie, Bart.
Stephen Fox, Eſq;
John Bond, Eſq;
John Hedworth, Eſq;
Robert Shaſtoe, Eſq;
Samuel Tuffnel, Eſq;
Sir Philip Barker, Bart.
Honourable Benjamin Bathurſt, Eſq;
Thomas Maſters, Eſq;
Edward Hartley, jun. Eſq;
Thomas Geers, Eſq;
Right Honourable William Lord Viſcount Bateman.
Charles Cæſer, Eſq;
John Bigg, Eſq;
Sir Roger Meredith, Bart.
Sir William Hardreſs, Bart.

Peter

Peter Bold, Eſq;
Sir John Jennings, Kt.
Sir Thomas Lowther, Bart.
Thomas Liſter, Eſq;
Sir Clobry Noel, Bart.
Right Honourable Lord William Manners.
George Wright, Eſq;
Sir George Beaumont, Kt.
Sir John Tyrwhit, Bart.
Charles Hall, Eſq;
William Noel, Eſq;
Edward Keymeys, *Eſq;*
Colonel Harbourd, *Eſq;*
Right Honourable Sir Charles Turner, Bart.
His Excellency Horatio Walpole, *Eſq;*
Sir Edward Bacon of Garboldiſham, Bart.
Right Honourable Algernoon Coote, Earl of Montrath.
Brigadier-General Charles Churchill, Eſq;
Sir Juſtinian Iſham, Bart.
Thomas Cartwright, Eſq;
Honourable Colonel Edward Montagu, Eſq;
Sir William Middleton, Bart.
Right Honourable Scrope, Lord Viſcount How.

Burlace Warren, Eſq;
Honourable John Stanhope, Eſq;
Honourable Sir Thomas Clifton, Knt. of the Bath.
Honourable Brigadier Richard Sutton, Eſq;
Honourable James Pelham, Eſq;
Sir William Stapleton, Bart.
William Bromley, Eſq;
George Clark, L.L D.
Thomas Romney, Eſq;
Francis Knolys, Eſq;
Right Honourable William, Marquis of Blandford.
Honourable Francis North, Eſq;
John Walcot, Eſq;
William-Laycon Child, Eſq;
Robert *Moore*, Eſq;
Robert Gay, Eſq;
Thomas Edward, Eſq;
George Speke, Eſq;
Sir Hoſwel Tynte, Bart.
Alexander Lutterell, Eſq;
Thomas *Medlycot*, Eſq;
Sir John Cope, Bart.
George Bridges, Eſq;
Anthony Henley, Eſq;
Charles Withers, Eſq;
Sir Walter-Wagſtaff Bagot, Bart.
Joſeph-Gaſcoigne Nightingale, Eſq;

Honourable

Honourable Thomas Willoughby, Esq;
Sir Jermyn Davers, Bart.
William Acton, Esq;
Dudley North, Esq;
Right Honourable John Lord Harvey.
Peter Burrel, Esq;
James Butler, Esq;
Bulstrode Peachy, *alias* Knight, Esq;
Sir Adolphus Oughton, Knight and Baronet.
Sir William Keyt, Bart.
William Bromley, jun. Esq;
John-Ivory Talbot, Esq;
Thomas Martyn, Esq;
Giles Eyre, Esq;
Francis Annesley, Esq;
John Hoskyns Gifford, Esq;
Charles Boone, Esq;
Borlace Webb, Esq;
Honourable John St. John, Esq;
Sir Herbert-Perrot Packington, Bart.
John Rudge, Esq;
Cholmley Turner, Esq;
George Crowle, Esq;
Sir Henry Slingsby, Bart.
William Aislabie, Esq;
John York, Esq;
George Gregory, Esq;
Sir Thomas Frankland, Bart.
Thomas Robinson, Esq;

Charles

Charles Pelham, *Eſq*;
Henry Pierſe, *Eſq*;
Sir William Lowther, Bart.
William Lowther, *Eſq*;
Sir William Aſhburnham, Bart.
Thomas Pelham, jun. *Eſq*;
Honourable Sir William Gage, Bart. and Knight of the Bath.
Watkins-William Wynne, *Eſq*;
William-Gwin Vaughan, *Eſq*;
Right Honourable John Lord Viſcount Lisbourne.
Arthur Bevan, *Eſq*;
Robert *Middleton*, *Eſq*;
Sir Roger Moſtyn, Bart.
Sir Charles Keymis, Bart.
Richard Vaughan, *Eſq*;
Honourable Price Devereux, *Eſq*;
William Owen, Eſq;
Sir Humphry Howarth, Bart.
Honourable William Duff, *Eſq*,
Honourable George Baillie, *Eſq*;
Honourable Charles Areskine, *Eſq*;
George Mackenzie, Eſq;
Robert Dundoſs, Eſq;
Sir John Anſtruther, Bart.
James Scot, Eſq;
Alexander Hamilton, Eſq;
Honourable John Douglas, Eſq;
Honourable John Drummond, Eſq;

Sir

Sir John Schaw, Bart.
Lieutenant General Charles Roſs, Eſq;
William Douglas, jun. Eſq;
Sir John Bingle, Eſq;
Henry Cunningham, Eſq;
Right Honourable William Sutherland, Lord Strathnaver.
Honourable Colonel William Dalrymple, Eſq;
Colonel Robert Munro, jun. Eſq;
Peter Campbell, Eſq;
John Drummond, Eſq;
Colonel Philip Anſtruther, Eſq;
Honourable Col. James St. Clair, Eſq;
Thomas Ereskine, Eſq;
Daniel Campbell, Eſq;
Sir James Dalrymple, Bart.
John Murray, Eſq;
Archibald Douglas, ſen. Eſq;
John Dalrymple, Eſq;
Honourable William Steuart, Eſq;

FINIS